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breeding of a more willing, stout-hearted race of horses. If whips are necessary to start a horse up, why not restrict jockeys to a light piece of rattan or a rope's end, instead of allowing the use of the villainous, cutting catgut, whalebone, and steel? Spurs should be abolished altogether.

One of the superior attractions of a trotting race is that it is rarely expedient to whip a horse. A good trotter will do his best without a whip, and the latter will only make him break and run. Indeed, as an exhibition of a strong inherent trait and careful training in the animal, and skill in the driver, trotting races may claim marked superiority over running races.

But to sum up. Gambling and a cruel, blunting abuse of animals are obvious and ugly blots on any showing that the turf can make as a beneficial source of recreation. It is not expected that the popularity of racing—transient though it may be—will be much affected by this review. We may only help some to form opinions or to strengthen ones already formed. If the turf is an evil, one should give it no half-indorsement. If it is only half bad it should be reformed. As in dealing with the liquor traffic, it may not be most expedient to employ prohibitive measures. There is one weapon that is resistless, and which any one may wield to some extent, and that is public sentiment. If that can become moulded into rigid law for the prevention of gambling and cruelty on racetracks, then, as regards all its innocent features we heartily say, "Long life to the Turf!" Racing as a spectacle is so passive a recreation that it can never rank in beneficial results with games or sports which are actively participated in. But there is a way of trying conclusions of speed between horses which is sportsmanlike, gentlemanly, and unselfish, which has regard for a horse's feelings and powers, and which is not a mere money-getting scheme. May such racing prevail over the odious practices now prevalent!

C. H. CRANDALL.

THE READING OF POOR CHILDREN.

For a long time I have had exceptional opportunities of watching the reading of the children of a poor city neighborhood. Every week-day evening for half an hour after dinner (7 to 7:30) the parlors of the Andover House are open to children who wish to take books home to read. Our entire library is contained in a single revolving bookcase, but in the course of a little over a year it has somehow supplied more than 200 children with more than 2,500 books.

All along the demand for fairy stories has been phenomenal. It has come from boys and girls alike, without distinction of age. How far this is characteristic of the children of working people I do not know. Our young people are, for the most part, of Irish parentage, and we attribute much of their passion for the imaginative to this Celtic strain. Strangely enough (it may be because their critical faculties are not sufficiently developed to admit of fine discriminations) they much prefer books that are all fact to those that are a blending of fact and fancy. Thus, histories are second only to fairy tales in popularity. By histories ("war books" the boys call them) must be understood American histories, and always, by preference, those dealing with the Civil War or the Revolution. In fact, the appetite for American history is so ravenous that the two or three dry historical text-books which have somehow crept into the shelves have been greedily devoured.

Books of travel and adventure have a considerable vogue, less, however,

than would naturally be expected, in view of the fact that the majority of the library patrons are boys. Of the 2,500 copies mentioned, 353 have been books of pure adventure, and 282 books of travel. That the numbers of fairy tales and histories recorded are only 382 and 314 respectively is a splendid illustration of the way in which unexplained figures may lie. The truth is our supply both of fairy books and war books has been shamefully meagre, while the supply of books of travel and adventure has been ample. Daily association and talk with the children leaves no room for doubt that, with their choice allowed free range, fifty per cent. of the entire output would have been fairy stories, and at least half of the remaining fifty per cent. "war books." Stories of school and home life, manuals of games and sports, funny books, ballads and narrative poems, and adaptations of natural and applied science are received with some degree of interest. The old favorites, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Swiss Family Robinson*, *Arabian Nights*, *Tom Brown*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *Mother Goose* charm here as everywhere. Of the standard novelists Cooper, Scott, and Dickens are read, but with no great degree of ardor.

Calls for special books may often be traced to changes of programme at the theatres. Thus a temporary demand was created for *Oliver Twist*, *Rip Van Winkle*, the *Merchant of Venice*, the *Three Musketeers*, and even for Tennyson's *Becket*. The reason for such other special calls as Erckmann-Chatrian's *Citizen Bonaparte*, Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables*, Scott's *Marmion*, the lives of Havelock, Clive, Grattan, and Sir Francis Drake, George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, and Tom Moore's *History of Ireland* can only be surmised.

The eagerness with which gaudily covered, copiously illustrated quartos are seized and borne away, regardless of their contents, shows an appreciation of the pictorial, and is, on that account, little (if at all) to be deplored. Still we are glad to have the occasional chance which the rebinding of the quartos gives, to insist that pictures and colored paper, do not make a book. And this lesson has its effect. Certain unpretentious duodecimos, which were hardly looked at in the beginning, have at last become prime favorites. It is interesting to note that the girls read boys' books with avidity, while the boys will not knowingly touch girls' books. If a boy gets a girls' book home by mistake, he hurries it back with the frankest expressions of disgust.

Some amusing things happen. The few boys who cannot read take out books as assiduously as the others, with a heroic determination to be "in the swim"; furthermore, the same willingness appears, as in adult Boston society, to feign admiration for the books approved by the social leaders (in this case the leaders of the "gangs"). A boy was heard advising his younger brother to take out the "Tale of Troy." "Dat's de book you'se wants ter git," he said, "dat'll tell yer all about New York an' de Bowery." Another boy whom I had noticed gazing longingly at the top shelves, on which the works of Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, etc., were ranged, sidled up to me with an abashed appeal that he be allowed to take out "a work." Plainly he looked on works as something too high and mighty for such as he. His "work" secured, he displayed a fine scorn for the boys who took out "pitcher books," because they were not "high enough in school" to read "works." Of course, many of these children get hold of and read sensational newspapers and the worst sort of paper-covered literature. For all that, their taste is, on the whole, still healthy. It will remain so if

plenty of the right sort of books are brought into their midst and kept there. They know there is a public library, but they have not learned to use it, deterred, no doubt, by distance, the red tape of giving references, the inconvenient obscurity of the catalogue, and the danger of incurring fines. Our little case of books leads up naturally to the Public Library, and by taking from there, on our cards, occasional books for the children, we may be able in time to stimulate them to take out cards of their own. This would be a distinct and permanent gain.

ALVAN F. SANBORN,

RESTLESS FRENCH CANADA.

It was a French Canadian premier who declared, amid deafening plaudits, that the last gun in defence of British connection would be fired by a French Canadian gunner. His ardor was rewarded by his sovereign, who promptly created him a knight and aide-de-camp on her personal staff. The Dominion has not grown very old since that patriotic period was pronounced, and yet it is from the lips of two prominent leaders of the French Canadians, the one a Liberal ex-premier, the other a Conservative ex-lieutenant-governor, that the severing of the imperial tie, and separation from the British flag, are urged, with more or less eloquence of phrase. True both statesmen are out of a job at present. It is also true that the voice which pleaded with such rhetorical effect for the continuance of the old relationship belonged to one who occupied a high and lucrative office. A few years ago no responsible Canadian leader would have faced the electors with the cry of Independence. To day no English leader would attempt it. And yet the loyalty of French Canada seems, on the surface, to be sincere. A chief, high in the esteem of the French Liberals, once said, "France gave us life, but England gave us liberty, freedom, and self-government." The outburst caused applause, and there was waving of handkerchiefs, while the more emotional in the audience shed tears. Not long ago Fréchette's drama of "Papineau" was produced in Quebec City. The heroic and patriotic passages, of which there are many in the play, were applauded. The English military officers, prototypes of those remarkable warriors familiar to the spectators of an Irish drama, were, of course, hissed whenever they presented themselves. Their loyal sentiments were greeted by the youths in the galleries with execrations loud and deep. The feeling evoked doubtless was inherited from their cradles. And yet those half-grown boys would willingly fight to maintain the Canadian constitution. The devotion of the French Canadians, as a whole, to Great Britain, despite the invectives of the demagogues, is strong. The Church, always wise where her own interests are concerned, encourages British connection, and teaches her flock to obey the laws and respect the authorities. In 1837 the Church sided with the English oppressors. At an earlier time, when the marauder appeared on the scene, and put temptation in the way, the powerful arm of the hierarchy was raised aloft, and again it triumphed. The Church in Canada understands her people. She thinks for many of them. But her own safety is her first thought. The peace of Paris gave civil liberty to the people of Quebec, but, says Parkman, "the conqueror left their religious system untouched, and through it they have imposed upon themselves a weight of ecclesiastical tutelage that finds few equals in the most Catholic countries of Europe. Such guardianship is not without